



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

## NMFS Announces Public Hearings for a Proposed Rule Affecting the U.S. Swordfish Fishery

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) proposes to modify current regulations affecting the U.S. swordfish fishery as published in a proposed rule on November 28, 2006 (71 FR 68784). These measures are intended to provide opportunities for U.S. vessels to fully harvest the domestic swordfish quota, in recognition of the improved stock status of North Atlantic swordfish, while ensuring that bycatch of non-target and protected species remain within acceptable levels. Seven public hearings have been scheduled to gather public comments on the proposed rule.

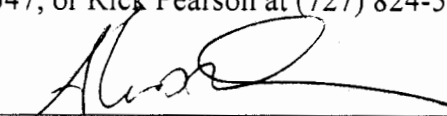
These public hearings will be combined with scoping meetings to gather comments on forthcoming shark management measures in an amendment to the Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan (HMS FMP). The time allotted to swordfish and shark management measures will be distributed accordingly to provide ample opportunity for the public to comment on both topics. Time may be split equally or additional time may be allotted to either shark or swordfish measures, as necessary, depending on the attendees' primary interests.

The public hearings for this action will be conducted as follows:

1. Wednesday, January 17, 2007, 6-9 p.m. Northeast Regional Office, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930.
2. Thursday, January 18, 2007, 6-9 p.m. City of Madeira Beach, 300 Municipal Drive, Madeira Beach, Florida 33708.
3. Thursday, January 18, 2007, 6-9 p.m. Manahawkin Public Library, 129 North Main Street, Manahawkin, NJ 08050.
4. Tuesday, January 23, 2007, 6-9 p.m. Destin Community Center, 101 Stahlman Avenue, Destin, FL 32541.
5. Thursday, January 25, 2007, 6-9 p.m. Bayou Black Recreational Center. 3688 Southdown Mandalay Road, Houma, LA 70360.
6. Tuesday, January 30, 2007, 6-9 p.m. Fort Pierce Library, 101 Melody Lane, Fort Pierce, FL 34950.
7. Wednesday, January 31, 2007, 6-9 p.m. Manteo Town Hall, 407 Budleigh Street, Manteo, NC 27954.

Comments can be submitted to Sari Kiraly, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 by **5pm on January 31, 2007**. Please mark the outside of the envelope "Comments on Proposed Swordfish Rule." Comments can also be submitted via e-mail at [SF1.110206A@noaa.gov](mailto:SF1.110206A@noaa.gov), or via FAX at (301) 713-1917.

This notice is a courtesy to Atlantic Swordfish Fisheries interests to keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register. For further information, contact Sari Kiraly, at (301) 713-2347, or Rick Pearson at (727) 824-5399.

  
Alan Risenhoover  
Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

JAN 3 2007

Date